

## Message Text

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73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

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R 102046Z MAR 76

FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC

TO SECSTATE WASHDC588

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMCONSUL HALIFAX

AMCONSUL CALGARY

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

AMCONSUL ST JOHNS

AMCONSUL TORONTO

AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

UNCLAS QUEBEC 47

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJECT: BOURASSA RESPONDS

REF: QUEBEC 45 OF 3/8, QUEBEC 44 OF 3/6

1. BOURASSA, IN CHARACTERISTICALLY UNEMOTIONAL STYLE, RESPONDED IN TWENTY MINUTE INTERVIEW ON CBC TELEVISION LAST NIGHT TO TRUDEAU'S MARCH 5 CRITICISMS. HIS SUBSTANTIVE ARGUMENTS WERE FAMILIAR. HE DEFENDED QUEBEC'S POSITION ON REPATRIATION, HER PARTICULARITY AND NEED FOR CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOC TO ASSIST IN FINANCING OLYMPIC DEFICIT. TAKING MORE AGGRESSIVE POSTURE, HE TOLD OF HIS EFFORTS MOBILIZE OTHER PROVINCIAL PREMIERS AGAINST TRUDEAU'S ANNOUNCED INTENTION UNILATERALLY REPATRIATE CONSTITUTION. CLAIMED HE HAD REACHED ALL HIS PROVINCIAL COLLEAGUES EXCEPT BENNETT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA WHO IS ON VACATION. SAID HE WAS OPEN QUOTES VERY ENCOURAGED CLOSE QUOTES BY THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT. HATFIELD OF NEW BRUNSWICK, BOURASSA CLAIMED, TERMED TRUDEAU'S ULTIMATUM AN UNCLASSIFIED

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OPEN QUOTES ABUSE OF POWER CLOSE QUOTES. CONCLUDING THIS

PORTION HIS REMARKS, BOURASSA RAISED POSSIBILITY OF MEETING OF PROVINCIAL PREMIERS TO WORK OUT COMMON STRATEGY WHICH COULD INCLUDE JOINT APPEAL TO QUEEN. HE MODESTLY ADMITTED THAT HE WAS NOT SURE WHETHER ALL PROVINCES WOULD AGREE ON SINGLE APPROACH BUT ASSURED VIEWERS THAT OPEN QUOTES QUEBEC WILL NOT STAND ALONE CLOSE QUOTES.

2. CHARACTERISING TRUDEAU'S TONE AS OPEN QUOTES INSOLENT CLOSE QUOTES, BOURASSA NOTED A LONG TRADITION OF FEDERAL PRIME MINISTERIAL ABUSE OF THEIR QUEBEC COUNTERPARTS WHEN LATTER DID NOT AGREE WITH THEM. SAID HE HAS BECOME USED TO SUCH ILL-TEMPERED TONES AS THEY ARE USED AGAINST HIM OFTEN BY PEQUISTES AND OPEN QUOTES COMMON FRONT CLOSE QUOTES LABOR LEADERS.

3. AS OPEN QUOTES QUEBEC'S POLITICAL LEADER CLOSE QUOTES HE HAS RESPONSIBILITY TO DEFEND PROVINCIAL INTERESTS. FOREMOST AMONG THESE INTERESTS ARE GUARANTEES OF CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY. OPEN QUOTES QUEBEC IS NOT A PROVINCE LIKE THE OTHERS CLOSE QUOTES, HE ASSERTED. BASING HIS ARGUMENTS FOR FEDERALISM MAINLY ON ITS ECONOMIC BENEFITS, BOURASSA AGAIN MENTIONED FORMULA OPEN QUOTES WHICH OTHER AREAS OF WORLD ARE WORKING TOWARDS: A FEDERAL PARLIAMENT AND A COMMON MARKET CLOSE QUOTES.

4. REVIEWING NOW FAMILIAR ARGUMENTS FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE IN FINANCING OLYMPIC DEFICIT, BOURASSA CHARACTERIZED TRUDEAU'S REFUSAL OF AID AS BEING BASED ON QUESTIONABLE GROUNDS. HE THEN SUGGESTED TRUDEAU MAY THINK HIS REFUSAL OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE WILL WIN HIM SUPPORT IN ANGLOPHONE CANADA. ON CONTRARY, ACCORDING OPEN QUOTES OUR OWN INFORMATION CLOSE QUOTES, POLLS SHOW AT LEAST 55 PERCENT OF CANADIANS FAVOR A FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION TO OLYMPICS.

5. SPEAKING OF TRUDEAU'S NOW WELL PUBLICIZED AND OFTEN DISTORTED CRITICISM OF APPLICATION OF BILL 22, BOURASSA SAID PM'S REMARKS, PARTICULARLY THOSE REFERRING TO OPEN QUOTES POLITICAL STUPIDITY CLOSE QUOTES, WERE DIRECTED NOT ONLY AT BOURASSA HIMSELF BUT AT ALL QUEBECOIS.

6. COMMENT: BOURASSA HAD LITTLE OPTION BUT TO REPLY TO WHAT MOST QUEBECOIS VIEW AS DIRECT SLAP IN FACE. HAD HE NOT DONE SO, BOURASSA'S IMAGE AS EFFECTIVE POLITICAL LEADER WOULD HAVE SUFFERED EVEN GREATER DAMAGE. IN HIS CAREFUL WAY, BOURASSA OBVIOUSLY TRIED TO BALANCE NEED FOR SUFFICIENTLY UNCLASSIFIED

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FORCEFUL RESPONSE WITH DESIRE AVOID FURTHER POLITICALLY DAMAGING ATTACKS BY NOTORIOUSLY PUGNACIOUS TRUDEAU. HIS PLOY OF APPEALING TO OTHER PROVINCIAL PREMIERS FOR SUPPORT WAS IMAGINATIVE AND COULD GAIN HIM SOME PUBLIC RELATIONS POINTS, PARTICULARLY IF HE IS ABLE TO CITE POSITIVE INTERPROVINCIAL SUPPORT IN TERMS OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS SIMILAR TO THOSE ATTRIBUTED BY PRESS TO HATFIELD OF NEW BRUNSWICK. MCNAMARA

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